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No. 229.

A MOTHER GOOSE PLAY

For Any Number of Children

BY

M. D. BARNUM

AUTHOR OF "OUR AUNT FROM CALIFORNIA," "THE FRENCH MAID AND THE PHONOGRAPH," ETC.

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A MOTHER GOOSE PLAY

CHARACTERS:

Mother
Older Children
*Youngest child
Mother Goose
King Cole
*Two pages
*Three fiddlers
Miss Muffet
Jack Spratt
Mrs. Jack Spratt
Mistress Mary
*Three Pretty Maids
*Lady-bird
King
Queen
Maid
Chef
A Big Blackbird
*Little Blackbirds
The Clock
*The Mouse
Chorus of Singers

Notes:—*The male parts in this play are such that the costuming and acting are entirely suitable for actors of either sex. The parts marked by an asterick are intended for very little children. For suggestions as to costumes and properties, see page 20.**

A MOTHER GOOSE PLAY

SCENE:—*A sitting room. The youngest child and several older children are playing tag. There is a couch at one side, a rocking-chair in center, and a small table at back with children's school books and a copy of "Mother Goose" upon it.*

FIRST CHILD. Tag! (*they run*)
SECOND CHILD. Tag! You're it! (*they run*)

(*Enter* MOTHER *with hats and coats*)

MOTHER. Come, children. It's time to go to school. Get ready. (*she helps them on with hats and coats.. They take books from table*)
OLDER CHILDREN. Good-bye. (*they run off*)
MOTHER. Good-bye, Here! Here! (*to youngest child who is running after the older ones*) You can't go.
YOUNGEST CHILD. I want to go to school, too.
MOTHER. You are too little to go to school.
YOUNGEST CHILD. (*crying*) Oh dear, I have no one to play with.
MOTHER. There, there! Don't cry. I tell you

what we'll do. I'll read to you. Run and get your Mother Goose. (*sits in rocker. Child runs and gets book*)

YOUNGEST CHILD. Oh, I love Mother Goose. (*sits on* MOTHER'S *lap and opens the book*)

MOTHER. (*rocking and chanting the rhyme*)

Old King Cole was a merry old soul,
And a merry old soul was he.
He called for his pipe and he called for his bowl
And he called for his fiddlers three.

YOUNGEST CHILD. I wish Mother Goose and Old King Cole would come and play with me.

MOTHER. Wouldn't that be nice!

YOUNGEST CHILD. Won't you read to me about the blackbirds?

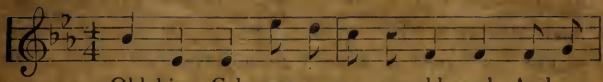
MOTHER. Find the place.

YOUNGEST CHILD. (*turning leaves*) Here it is!

MOTHER. (*as before*) Sing a song o' sixpence, a pocket full of rye, etc. (*as she chants, the child falls asleep*) Oh, she's gone to sleep. (*rises and lays her on the couch and covers her feet*) How happy she looks in her sleep! Maybe she is dreaming about Mother Goose. (*moves rocking chair over beside the couch, takes out knitting, sits and rocks and knits as if oblivious to all that follows. Enter* MOTHER GOOSE)

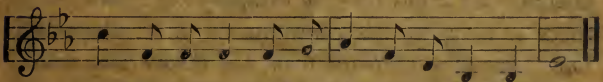
MOTHER GOOSE. Where is the little girl who loves Mother Goose? (*sees child on couch, approaches and waves her cane*) I'll put a spell upon her, and she shall have beautiful dreams. (*turns toward door and beckons. Enter Chorus, forming in line across front of stage,* MOTHER GOOSE *standing at one side*)

CHORUS. (*sings*)



Old king Cole was a mer-ry old soul, And a

mer-ry old soul was he. He called for his pipe, and he



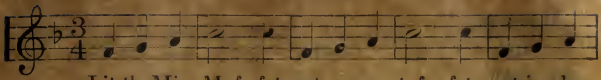
called for his bowl, and he called for his fid-dlers three.

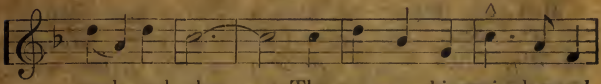
(*During song, a big arm-chair or throne is placed in the center of the stage behind the singers. A page takes his stand on either side of the throne. When the song has been sung once, the chorus divides, in half, facing to right and to left away from each other, and marching away to either side while singing the song a second time. The two halves march back on either side of the stage, and turn toward each other at the rear, reuniting to form a line across the back of the stage. The parting of the chorus has revealed the throne and the pages. Music and marching stops. Enter* KING COLE *with a hop skip and a jump, and with a ha! ha! he flings himself into his throne.*)

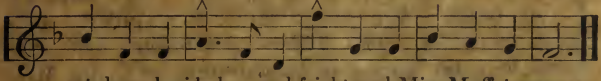
KING COLE. Pipe! (*pointing right.* RIGHT-HAND *page dashes away and fetches large pipe.* KING COLE *pretends to smoke with great enjoyment*) Bowl! (*pointing left.* LEFT-HAND *page dashes away*

and fetches large bowl. KING COLE *pretends to drink deeply)* Ha! My fiddlers three! (*Enter briskly the three fiddlers fiddling the tune of* "OLD KING COLE." (*See suggestion page* 21, *for fiddles.*) *They stand in a row and play the tune three times. The first time,* KING COLE *taps toe and nods head vigorously in time, having handed pipe and bowl to the pages. The second time, he grows more exuberant and keeps time by clapping his hands on his knees or slapping his pages on the back alternately. The third time he leaps from his throne and dances clumsily, but in good time, lifting first the right arm and the right knee, then the left arm and the left knee. The chorus standing at the back, also keep time to the music and imitate all the king's motions. All should wear an expression of huge enjoyment, and even the pages kick up their toes to the music. When music stops,* CHORUS *and pages quickly come to order and fiddlers withdraw.* KING COLE *seems not to notice cessation of music, but continues his dance until* MOTHER GOOSE *after trying in vain to attract his attention from the side comes to center and pokes her cane at him. He looks round, claps his hand over his mouth in consternation and runs out. The piano strikes up* "LITTLE MISS MUFFET," *while the chorus advances, each half filing forward at the side, then turning toward the center, so as to meet and again make a solid line before the footlights.*)

CHORUS. (*sings*)







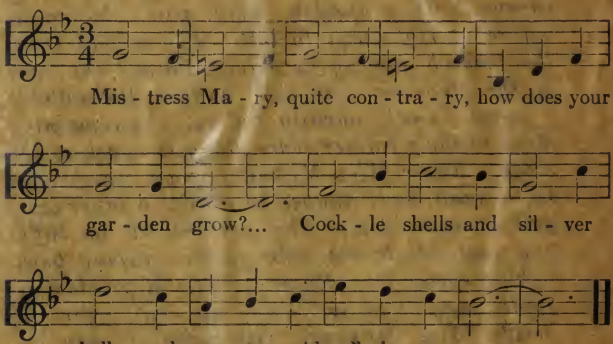
(*During the singing, the pages exit with throne, and stage-hands place stool or tuffet, and prepare to manipulate spider. The tune is sung twice. the first time, on the syllable "fright," the chorus, with a sudden jump, parts, facing as before to right and to left. The second time, they march singing as before, toward the back of the stage on each side, and on the syllable "fright," start violently and run the remaining steps to their former place along the back of the stage. Enter* MISS MUFFET, *spoon clutched in right hand, bowl hugged to breast in other arm, gait an eager trot. She seats herself on tuffet and pretends to eat with gusto, scraping bowl, licking spoon, etc. Enter spider. If practicable, spider may be lowered from the ceiling directly beside* MISS MUFFET. *Otherwise it may appear to crawl over the floor, being drawn by a black linen thread tied to a leg, and pulled by a person concealed in the opposite wing. When the spider reaches* MISS MUFFET'S *side,* MISS MUFFET *screams loudly and runs sobbing to* MOTHER GOOSE.)

MOTHER GOOSE. Don't be afraid, Miss Muffet. It's only a spider. Go back and pick up your bowl and spoon.

MISS MUFFET. No! No! No!

MOTHER GOOSE. Shame on you, Miss Muffet. Go at once. Go on. (MISS MUFFET *advances timidly. The spider gives a sudden little jump.* MISS MUFFET *screeches and runs again to* MOTHER GOOSE *without the bowl and spoon*) Very well, I'll do it myself. I'm not afraid of a spider. (*she advances boldly. The spider darts toward her. She drops cane and goose, and screaming runs with* MISS MUFFET (*also screaming*) *off the stage, the spider after them. The piano plays "Mistress Mary." The Chorus as before forms across front of stage.*

CHORUS. (*sings*)

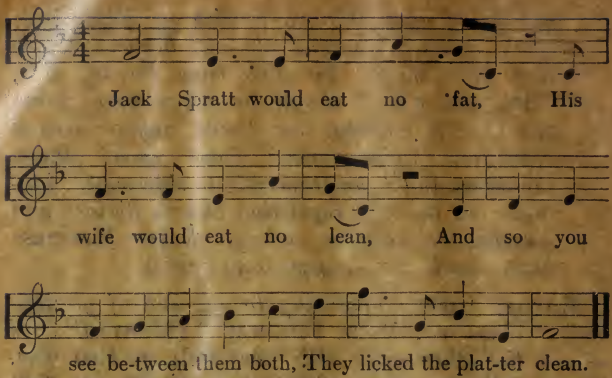


(*While this song is being sung,* MOTHER GOOSE *regains cane and goose and stands as before at one side. Tuffet, bowl, and spoon are removed. The brown garden-bed is laid down like a rug. The three pretty maids are hooded with green*

and kneel upon the brown with foreheads bent to the floor. A second piece of brown cloth is laid over them. To give time for all this, "Mistress Mary" should be sung two or three times. For variety, the chorus may on second repetition twine arms about each other's shoulders and sway from side to side while singing. On the last repetition chorus divides and marches to rear as before. Enter MISTRESS MARY *with watering-pot and rake.*)

MOTHER GOOSE. (*pointing to one end of garden-bed*) This way, Mary, this way. (MARY *at once strides the other way*) Oh, very well, go that way, then. (MARY *faces about and comes as first directed*) She's so contrary! (MOTHER GOOSE *uplifts hands and retires to one side, shaking her head.* MARY *sets down watering-pot and pretends to rake the garden-bed. Presently with her rake she touches each of the concealed maids. Each when touched rises slowly to knees, slipping off the upper brown cover, but retaining the green head shroud.* MISTRESS MARY *lays down her rake and pretends to water the bed. As she tips the watering-pot above the head of each maid, she touches her on the back with the free hand. At this signal each maid rises to her feet and pushes off the green head covering, and the three stand in a row smiling at the audience,* MISTRESS MARY *at one side pointing to them with pride. Three stage-hands place three large vases on the stage in a row. They then pick up the maids as if plucking flowers and stand each one in a vase.* MOTHER GOOSE *and* MISTRESS MARY *stand on each side admiring them. The music strikes up the tune of "Jack Spratt," and chorus briskly strides to front, meeting at the footlights and concealing the tableau*)

CHORUS. (*sings*)



(*During the song,* MISTRESS MARY, *garden-bed, vase and flowers are all removed, and the small table, nearly covered by a large platter is set in the center of the stage. A chair is placed at either end. The song is repeated as chorus marches to the rear. Enter* JACK SPRATT *and wife, arm in arm.* JACK *escorts his wife to her seat, puts her in her chair, then sits opposite.*)

JACK SPRATT. What part of the meat do you prefer, my dear?

MRS. SPRATT. Oh, I'm not particular. Any part will do for me. (*aside to audience*) I hope I get the fat. (*aloud to* JACK) You take what you want Jack.

JACK SPRATT. Oh, it doesn't matter what I have. (*aside to audience*) I hope I get the lean! (*aloud to wife*) You say what you like.

MRS. SPRATT. Oh no, you say what you like.

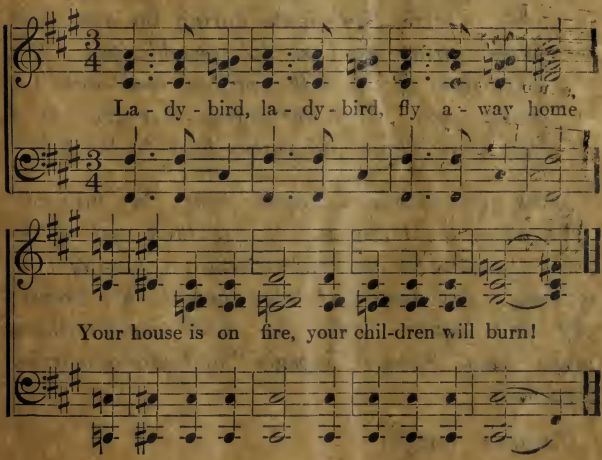
JACK SPRATT. Do express a preference.

MRS. SPRATT. (*modestly*) Well, since you press me,—I never take any lean.

JACK SPRATT. (*joyously*) And I never take any fat! (*they rise as if by simultaneous impulse,*

spread their arms wide and vigorously embrace. Then they resume seats and promptly begin to eat from the platter, lifting pretended food to their lips, first with one hand then with the other. Next they simultaneously grip the sides of the table with both hands raising the elbows high and ducking their heads to lick the platter. The platter should be large enough so that when each is licking at one end of the platter, the two heads just meet above the center—When they have taken three good licks, MOTHER GOOSE *taps with her cane and motions them to be off. They rise and retire, but take the platter with them, and when they reach a central position in the rear, face about and hold the platter before their faces, so that the tops of their heads can be seen above it, nodding as if they were still licking. The music plays the tune of Lady-bird, and the chorus marches in front of the licking couple.)*

CHORUS. (*sings*)



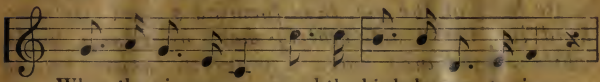
(White chorus sings the above, JACK SPRATT *and wife exit with table and chairs, and a plant is placed at one side near the front of the stage, with two large artificial larvæ among the leaves (for larvæ see suggestions page 22)* LADY-BIRD *crouches beneath the leaves. In marching back, the piano alone plays the tune, the chorus silent. When the music stops,* LADY-BIRD *moves diagonally across the stage toward the back, bending forward with arms folded, and walking lightly with little steps like an insect creeping. When she has nearly reached the chorus, the piano strikes the first chord of the music, and immediately with great impressiveness the chorus repeats the song, unaccompanied, with finger up-lifted as in warning, and on the word FIRE all point to the bush. If possible, electric flash-lights during the song cast flashes upon the bush to resemble fire. The* LADY-BIRD *listens with uplifted head until the music stops. Then she spreads her arms as if they were wings and rushes back to the bush)*

LADY-BIRD. *(screaming as she runs)* My children! *(she seizes the larvæ and throws them out of the bush, then kneels and picks them up, kissing each tenderly. She rises and hugs them to her breast)* My own larvæ! *(she pets and caresses them, music plays "Song o' Sixpence" and chorus marches forward.)*

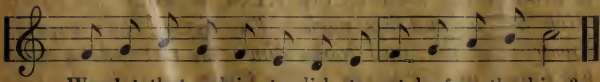
CHORUS. *(sings)*

1. Sing a song o' six-pence, a pock - et full o' rye—
2. The king was in his counting house, counting out his money,

Four and twen-ty black-birds baked in a pie.
The queen was in the parlor eating bread and hon - ey.



When the pie was o - pened the birds be-gan to sing,
The maid was in the gar-den, hang-ing out the clothes,



Was-'nt that a dain - ty dish to set be-fore the king?
There came a-long a dick - y bird and nipped off her nose!

(*During the singing of the first verse,* LADY-BIRD *and plant are removed, and the pie is set up in one-half of the stage, the little black-birds crouch in it, and are covered with the crust.* (*see suggestions page* 23) *During the singing of the second verse, the chorus moves back to form a semi-circle about the pie, facing outward and concealing the pie from the audience. This leaves the other half of the stage clear for the* KING *and* QUEEN. *Enter* KING, QUEEN, MAID *and* CHEF. *The* KING *escorts the* QUEEN *to a front position, the* CHEF *stands before the pie, the* MAID *takes her basket of clothes to a corner where she kneels and pretends to wash or wring out clothes.*)

KING. What have we for dinner to-day, my dear?

QUEEN. (*fanning herself in stately manner*) What have we for dinner to-day, Chef?

CHEF. (*to* QUEEN) Pie.

QUEEN. (*to* KING) Pie.

KING. (*clapping his hands*) Pie! Produce the pie. (*rubbing his hands gleefully*)

QUEEN. (*to* CHEF) Produce the pie.

CHEF. (*facing about to* CHORUS) Produce the pie. (CHORUS *divides, one-half marching to right, the other to left. They march around the pie, and unite back of the pie, thus forming a semi-circle behind it.* CHEF *deliberately sharpens a large knife, while stage-hands make appropriate noises behind scenes by rubbing together two pieces of sand-paper. The* QUEEN *takes out a very large napkin and ties it around the neck of the* KING, *making the points stick out behind his neck. The* KING *runs eagerly toward the pie, and looks down on it bending with his hands on his knees. The* CHEF *steps to the side opposite the* KING *and plunges his knife into the pie. The knife of course is of blunt cardboard. The little blackbirds all rise to their knees and stick their heads over the edge of the pie, pushing up the crust*)

LITTLE BLACKBIRDS. (*shrilly*) Peep! Peep! Peep! Peep! Peep! Peep! Peep! etc.

ALL. Oh! Oh! (QUEEN *and* CHORUS *clasp hands in alarm.* KING *raises his hands in amazement,* CHEF *leaves the pie and steps forward to make a bow. The little blackbirds see their chance and all hop out of the pie, waving their arms like wings and running all about the stage never ceasing their cry of "Peep!" The* CHEF *dismayed rushes to put them back into the pie. When he picks up a blackbird, it flaps and peeps vehemently. As soon as he puts one in the pie, he turns to run after another,*

and the one in the pie jumps out again. When it is apparent that the CHEF *cannot get them back in the pie, he drives them to the exit.)*

CHEF. Shoo! Shoo! Shoo! (*exit* CHEF *and birds*)

KING. (*pointing to pie*) Away with it! (*attendants run out with the pie*) My money! (*a chair and table containing money-bags are placed at one side in front.* KING *sits and pretends to count money, moving lips as if saying numbers.*)

QUEEN. Bread and honey! (*attendants bring chair and seat the* QUEEN *beside the* KING. *Two others kneel to right and left of her, presenting a plate of bread and a jar marked HONEY, with a spoon in it. The* QUEEN *eats airily. A clothesline, one end of which may be fastened before the play, is now quickly stretched up, and the maid rises and begins to hang up clothes in the vacant half of the stage*)

KING. (*counting aloud and clinking the money*) 997—998—999, one thousand! Ha! Ha! 1001, 1002 etc. (*the big blackbird runs in waving arms as if flying. She attacks the maid, making passes to reach the maid's nose*)

MAID. (*beating off bird*) Shoo! Shoo! Shoo! (*the bird snatches with one hand pretending to nip off the nose. The maid claps her hand over her nose with a shriek, starts toward the* KING, *and falls to her knees. She keeps her hand over her nose all the time during the rest of the act.*)

KING. (*rising and bending over her*) What's the matter?

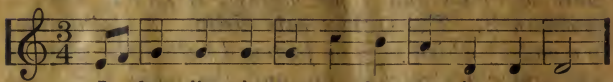
MAID. My nose is gone! (CHORUS *come forward and stand by in attitudes of pity and horror*)

KING. Oh! Oh, look at her! Oh! (QUEEN *steps up to look then falls back stiffly fainting in arms of her attendants. Blackbird during this dialogue has*

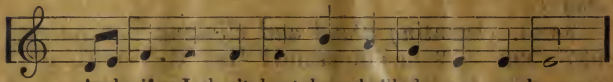
dropped on the floor an artificial nose previously concealed in her hand. She hops about it, cocking head and eyeing it sideways, bird-fashion; then stoops down, picks up the nose with her beak, (*see suggestions page* 23) *and flies away with it. The* KING *continues his exclamations without pause*) Poor girl! Poor girl! Oh, horrible! No nose!

CHORUS. No nose! (*all groan deeply. Music strikes up tune of "I Love Little Pussy." The* CHORUS *passing between the other actors, quickly form a line in front of them, shutting them from view.*)

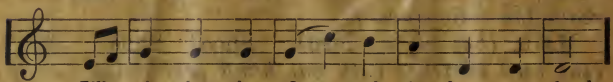
CHORUS. (*sings*)



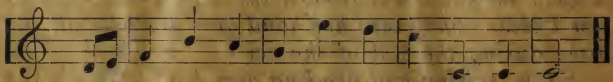
I love lit - tle pus - sy, her coat is so warm,



And if I don't hurt her she'll do me no harm.



I'll sit by the fire and give her some food,



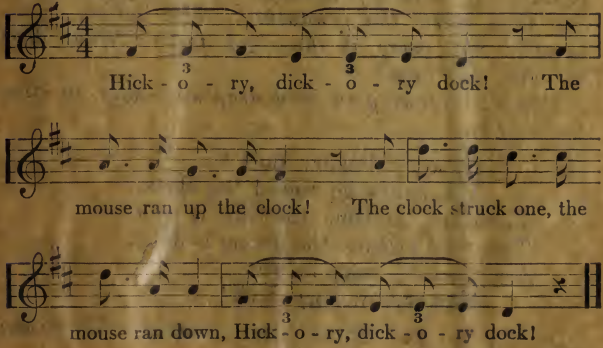
And pus - sy will love me be-cause I am good.

(*During the song,* KING, QUEEN, MAID, *their attendants and properties all remove, and a rug is placed center near the footlights. A very little girl sits on the rug, and beside her is placed a saucer of milk with a kitten lapping*

from it. (*See suggestions page* 23) *The chorus divide, march back and music stops. The little girl, watching the kitten, then sings the song unaccompanied. On the words "because I am good," she rises to her feet and looks earnestly at all the audience. She then takes the kitten up in her arms and caresses it, next picks up the saucer too, and makes her exit feeding the cat in her arms as she walks. A loud ticking is heard behind the scenes. The chorus uplift fingers and bend forward as if listening.*)

CHORUS. Sh! (*enter the clock, swinging one hand like a pendulum. In this hand is concealed a little "clicker" such as is used by steriopticon lecturers. With this, the loud regular ticks are made, as the clock steps forward keeping time. The other hand remains at the side and holds the rope ladder which dangles inconspicuously against the robe of the clock.* (*See suggestions pages* 23–24) *The clock halts in the center of the stage. The ticking continues. The piano gives a preliminary chord.*)

CHORUS. (*sings in tune to the ticking*)



(*The music stops. The clock ticks on. Enter the mouse running on tip-toe with short steps, hands hanging before the breast like the fore-paws of a dog when walking on its hind legs. The mouse does not at first notice the clock but creeps hither and thither, pausing before any change of direction, like a timid, hesitating mouse. It reaches the footlights at one side and pauses there.*)

MOUSE. (*high pitch*) Queek! (*it runs along the front and pauses again*) Queek! Queek! Queek! (*it turns and sees the clock and runs directly to it, grasps the arm that holds the ladder quickly mounting the three steps. It passes its nose from side to side as if smelling the clock. A gong of suitable sound to represent a strikng clock, strikes ONE behind the scenes. The pendulum and ticking stops. The mouse runs down as if frightened and scampers on all fours to crouch in one corner of the stage*)

MOTHER GOOSE. Dear me! The clock has stopped. I must wind it up. (*as she puts her hand to the clock face and turns her wrist, a watchman's rattle or the like is employed behind the scenes to imitate the noise of winding. She finishes winding, then starts the pendulum. The ticking is resumed. She peers at the clock face*) What does the clock say now?

CLOCK. (*reciting in loud deep sing-song, in time to its tick*)

Hickory dickory dock!
The hands go round the clock.
The time, the time, the time is gone.
The child awakes, the dream is done.
Away, away, away we run
Hickory, dickory dock!

(*On the words* "THE CHILD *awakes,*" YOUNGEST

CHILD *stirs on the couch, but does not yet open her eyes. On the words "Away, away, away" the clock takes three steps backward, and continues thus to pace toward exit. Without loss of time, after the last word of the stanza, the piano plays one preliminary chord and begins the tune of "Hickory dickory dock" as before, but repeating the third measure three times to fit the altered words. At the preliminary chord,* MOTHER GOOSE *and chorus lift their arms to point to the clock, now backing toward exit. Promptly with the piano they all sing the words of the clock and thus pointing and singing follow the clock off the stage. The music stops. The mouse peeps forth from its corner, comes out, and begins to frisk gayly, making its tail swing around by little jumps.*)

MOUSE. (*nearing couch*) Queek! Queek!

YOUNGEST CHILD. (*sitting up, stretching, and yawning loudly*) Ho—hum! (*the mouse, as if frightened scampers on all fours toward exit.* YOUNGEST CHILD *looks around just too late to see it go out, and remains staring at the exit. Pause*)

MOTHER. Well, dearie, so you waked up at last.

YOUNGEST CHILD. Where is the mouse gone?

MOTHER. What mouse?

YOUNGEST CHILD. (*rising and standing by mother's knee*) The mouse that ran up the clock.

MOTHER. (*rising and taking her by the hand*) Oh, you've been dreaming. (*they walk toward exit*)

YOUNGEST CHILD. Oh no, Mother. Mother Goose and all the rest came here to play with me. I saw them. And they all went out this way. (*pointing and nodding emphatically*)

MOTHER. (*laughing*) Nonsence, child. You've been asleep. It was all a dream. (*exit*)

THE END.

NOTES AND SUGGESTIONS.

No curtain is needed for this play.

If the stage is a very large one, it is effective to have each character, or set of characters, after performing thir part, retire to the rear of the stage instead of making exit. The characters will thus gradually form a picturesque standing semi-circle at the rear of the stage, in front of the chorus. The chorus can easily march in and out behind them. After the final speech of the clock all will form in procession and march off, pointing at the clock and singing with the chorus.

COSTUMES AND PROPERTIES.

The costumes are all planned for female performers, although several of the parts are adapted equally well for males.

Mother Goose. Dress and hat as commonly pictured. Cane in one hand, and a goose under the other arm. The goose may be cut of white cardboard, a flat silhouette with yellow-painted bill and feet. A better goose can be made by cutting out two pieces of cheesecloth in the shape of the outline of a goose. Sew up and stuff. Attach bill and feet of yellow muslin, and eyes of black buttons. Place a stick in the neck to stiffen it.

Old King Cole. Red paper-muslin robe from neck to feet, made like a coat and belted loosely with showy buckle in front. Straight piece across the back, falling like a cape from shoulders to heels. Wide flat collar, also border on cape and robe, of white canton flannel streaked with ink to resemble ermine. Wig and beard of white curled horse-hair obtainable at upholsterer's. Gilt crown.

Pages. Brown doublets to the knee cut in points

at the bottom. Long brown stockings. Wide flat brown collars cut in points at the bottom. Short conical brown caps, with feather at side. (*suitable brownish feathers can be obtained from feather dusters*)

FIDDLERS. Red suits made like those of pages, but with feathers, collars and belts of white.

FIDDLES. Cut out of brown cardboard and painted, or any small toy fiddles. Three violinists behind the scenes make the music, while the little fiddlers go through the motions.

MISS MUFFET. Costume of a little girl.

SPIDER. Made of black crepe paper and very stiff wire. Body about eight inches round, legs two feet long. Gilt paint marks the eyes and the joints of the legs.

MISTRESS MARY. Summer dress and garden hat.

GARDEN-BED. A brown muslin rug about five yards by two. Cockle shells six inches in diameter cut from white cardboard and marked like the shells of scallops, are sewed as a border on the muslin rug. The second piece of brown cloth to be laid over the maids, should match the rug. It is cut big enough to cover the children completely but no larger, as the smaller it is the more easily they can toss it aside when they begin to rise.

THREE PRETTY MAIDS. White dresses, and very large bright pink ribbon bows on the top of their heads. Their green hoods are loose conical bags covering the entire head and shoulders. The children are, of course, blinded with the hoods on, but their hands must be left free for pushing off the brown cover and later the green hoods.

VASES. Jardinieres or flower pots would do if big enough; but vases can be made by cutting very stiff cardboard into the shape of a tall fat vase, and shading the front with ink or paint to present a

curved appearance. The vases are made to stand, by fastening to the back of each at the bottom a large square hat-box. A few stitches of linen thread is more reliable than glue for fastening. Into the boxes the children are put when "plucked" by the stage-hands.

JACK SPRATT. Black-paper muslin suit, plain scant skirt. Coat, collar and tie like a man's. Hair parted on one side and flattened to head. Figure as thin as possible.

MRS. JACK SPRATT. Light calico dress, and mob cap to match. Full-gathered skirt, white kerchief about neck. Figure as fat as possible.

LADY-BIRD. White dress. Antennæ of black hat wire attached to top of head. Red wings with round black spots. To make the wings, cut semi-circles of stiff paper, big enough to reach from back of neck to hem of dress. Make the wings convex by little darts in outer edge. Cover them outside with dotted red muslin and line with black.

LARVÆ. About a foot long, made of black stocking legs, stuffed and pointed at one end, and tied round with thread at intervals to appear jointed. Black legs and colored spots are added as in nature.

PLANT. Should have long leaves if possible to go with magnified larvæ. A bucket of corn-stalks would do, bucket being covered with brown or green crepe paper.

KING. Like costume of King Cole, but purple in color, and burnt cork mustache and goatee instead of white beard and wig.

QUEEN. Train dress of green with gold paper border, and ruff of white lace shelf-paper. Fancy bag hanging from girdle holds the napkin for the king. Gay fan.

MAID. Short dress, cap and apron with bright bows.

CHEF. Plain white dress. Big butcher's apron extending to hem of dress. Cap of ordinary paper bag, squared at bottom, and turned back at top to make a fold around edge of cap.

BLACK-BIRDS. Black dominoes. Black caps with shoulder capes attached, and bills of yellow-covered cardboard sewed like visors to project over foreheads.

PIE. Sheets of cardboard sewed together to form a cylinder fifteen inches high and two yards in diameter. This will accommodate seven little blackbirds. (*the rhyme says twenty-four, but as they run about, the audience will hardly be able to count them*)

CRUST. A circle of cheese-cloth about seven feet in diameter with a lumpy frill around it. The frill is to lap well over the edge of "the dish."

MONEY-BAGS. Three fat, dark-colored bags, about a foot high, well stuffed, and marked on the front with a gold paper dollar sign. Concealed behind them on the table should be pieces of glass or metal with which king can make clinking noise as he pretends to count money.

BIG BLACKBIRD. Costumed like little blackbirds. A large pink artificial nose is concealed in her hand, and to this the bar or armature of a magnet is sewed. A good horse-shoe magnet is sewed to the under side of the bird's beak, and by means of this she seems to pick up the nose with her beak previous to her exit.

KITTEN. A real kitten is better than an artificial one. It should be made hungry, but of course not cruelly so. If half-grown, it can go without food comfortably for five hours previous to the play, and will then lap eagerly during the little girl's song. Several stage rehearsals are advisable to accustom the animal to the place.

CLOCK. The actor taking this part should be tall.

A large square hat-box is inverted over the head. To make it secure, it can be sewed firmly to a smaller box within it, the smaller box being of a size to fit snugly over the head of the wearer. The box is neatly covered with oak-brown cloth, which falls straight to the floor on all four sides, completely concealing the wearer, except for her feet, and her arms, which are thrust through long brown sleeves attached on each side of the robe. The semblance of a clock face is painted on a large circle of white cardboard and attached to the front of the head-box. The clock hands are painted to indicate the hour at which the play is expected to end. As this costume, of course, blinds the wearer, she must know beforehand how many steps forward to take, and be assisted at her entrance to start straight.

Rope-ladder. Hangs from the clock's hand by the top rung. Should have three other rungs for the mouse to mount on, the lowest rung just clearing the ground as the clock walks. It must be strong enough to bear the weight of the mouse. It looks well to have the rope and the rungs as nearly as possible the same color as the clock's robes.

Mouse. The smaller the child, the better for this part. A little colored child is very effective. The costume should be a long brownish-gray dress, with a tail sewed to the bottom of the back. The tail is about the size and shape of an umbrella case, and a little sand in the end enables it to swing around well. For the head of the mouse, first make a cone of thin cardboard and fit it to the child's head like a dunce cap tilted forward. Cover this smoothly with stuff to match the dress, and at the back and sides of the head let the goods fall down to the shoulders like a big hood; but between the temples cut it away so as to leave the child's face uncovered. Her face is to look out from the mouse's throat, some-

what as the black-bird's faces appear beneath their bills. The nose of the mouse-head is the top of the cap, and here wire feelers are attached. Rounding mouse-ears of muslin-covered cardboard, and eyes of black buttons are attached in appropriate places. The sides of the hood must widen at the bottom to fasten under the child's chin.

CHORUS. Simple every day dresses of white. The number of singers should be sufficient to make a solid line across the front of the stage.

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